

FRENCH LITERATURE.

What the Authors of France Are Publishing.

"STANDARD" LIGHT READING

Novels, Novelle, Star-Glossing, Histories and Historiettes.

PARIS, July 1, 1874.

LES DEVOUEMENTS DE ROYALTY. By M. A. Second.

The latest romance of M. Second, entitled "Les Devolements de Royalty," is a charming book, written in the best style of art, with a facile and agreeable pen. The character of Royalty, a crusty and devoted old servant, is admirably drawn, and there is a general tone of quiet humor about the book very refreshing and very rare among French authors. It is to be regretted, however, that M. Second brings into the creature of his imagination a sorrowful death, because, if a writer can find no other way than this out of human trouble, he had better let it alone. We all know that we can die; that which we want to know is how it may be possible to live, and to live bravely, under such doubts and perplexities as might overwhelm us. If we were not supported by good advice and example, our life has been reasonably called a battle, and there is something cowardly in laying down our arms in the midst of it because we have got a few scratches or an awkward knock in the head. As long as we can stand and think and raise an arm against the powers of darkness and evil, either on high, so that we cannot expect to remain stationary. If we receive wounds in the struggle we may remember, not without a great hope, that there is one eye which never sleeps and is forever regarding us. We are doing our creator's work, and if we do it patiently and conscientiously we shall have our reward. Even the tears and anguish which sometimes make our lot so very bitter are as nothing to the glory which shall be revealed to us, and our worst misfortune are but the disquiet of a brief summer which shall be followed by a bright awakening.

Among the other papers which appear in this collection is the pleasing "Sonnettes de M. Berquin," but the gem of the volume is "The Marquis." It is the history of the misadventures of a usurer transformed into a landlord, and it might appear to advantage when compared with some of the scenes where Balzac describes provincial society in France.

"Mme. Eugenie." By Champfleury. (Chapman.)

The story of "Mme. Eugenie" is founded upon that eternal subject which supplies half the book-shelves in all countries where the French language is read and spoken. It is the great fault of English authors that they deal with their characters as if human life was dominated only by the passions of greed and vengeance. Their villains are thieves and murderers, lawyers and detectives; their virtuous characters are disinterested, merciful, and become rich. French authors are wholly engrossed by the crime of adultery, and the numberless manners in which the changes have been rung upon this single theme almost surpass belief. English authors appear entirely to forget that there are men and women who are not driven to money or revenge. There are people by the score and by the hundred who would not walk across the street against their inclination for half Broadway. A railway engineer in eager pursuit of his business once told the Duke of Devonshire that it would add £10,000 a year to his income if he would allow an iron road to go through one of his parks. "I do not want £10,000 a year," answered the Duke, curtly, and so terminated the interview. Then as to vengeance. A wise man never dreams of it, nor a clever woman. A proud man rises superior to it; a dull man is indignant to it. The desire of wreaking wrath upon an adversary is feeling only characteristic of the irascible and morose. French authors, who attribute all the good and evil in the world to the wish which every man is supposed to form for his neighbor's wife, are equally oblivious of the facts which are stated with remarkable distinctness by St. Paul. In truth more than half of mankind are not at all disposed to transgress the laws of society for a pretty face, and a prudent young gentleman once summarized the prevailing opinion upon this subject with extreme neatness. "My grapes are sour," said a scornful beauty who had failed to attract him, hoping that the taunt would induce him to commit an act of folly. "Why, no," replied the prudent young man very calmly, "my grapes are not sour, but they are too good." The fact is that no man who has fortune or reputation to lose is ready to risk them in a divorce suit; and if we were all to run about rashly with the intention of committing adultery, as we are said to do in French novels, half the adult male population of the world would be forthwith murdered by incensed husbands. M. Champfleury, the author of "Mme. Eugenie," takes no account of this practical statement of the case, and has, therefore, set his mind to work on the old story of an improper connection between a married lady and a handsome good-for-nothing. André, the lover of Mme. Eugenie, is a common type of his class, a half-bred, cold-blooded, cold-blooded, cold-blooded creature, whose proper place in society is a bareheaded apprentice. When he has gratified his vanity by chattering to his acquaintances about the glaring impropriety of which he has been guilty, he finds no more amusement in behaving like a scoundrel. Mme. Eugenie, however, having once misbehaved herself, would rather be hanged for a sheep than for a lamb; and when she finds that André will not supply her with the sheep required he endeavors to take romantic revenge upon her by condemning him to an eternal regret for the loss of which he never really belonged to him. André, on his part, instead of rejecting the offer of a divorce, feels, according to M. Champfleury's theory, that there is some reason to doubt as to the accuracy of Mme. Eugenie's account of one of his legs, and as though he were constantly suffering from the amputation limb. It is a simple rather forcible than elegant; but M. Champfleury must take the responsibility of it. The book is wound up, as usual, by an eloquent homily on the danger of culpable connections.

La Doctress Ox. By M. J. Verne. (Hietzel.)

M. Verne has published another collection of novelettes or short stories, which will add much to his reputation as an author. The first and most important of these reprints is entitled "Dr. Ox," and is a scientific story, extremely gay and amusing. It might have been written by Edgar A. Poe in his best vein of humor, before the splendid imagination and that wonderful insight into mind and things which he possessed drifted away into darkness. "A Drama in the Air" is an emotional account of the voyage of two aviators, one of whom is seized with a fit of raging madness while they are above the clouds. "Wintering in the Ice" is a sombre recital of the dangers and sufferings which must be expected by those who tread the traces of Franklin and Parry. "Dr. Zacharias" is a story which has a grave moral, presented in a fantastic form, with startling freshness and vivacity. It reveals that scientific pride may possibly be the most dangerous and subtle of all temptations to the human intellect. There is a novelty and vigor in the style of M. Verne which no writer in the English language has attained since the time of Daniel Defoe. His tales of the marvelous and incredible have such a simple air of truth about them that they almost beguile one into the belief of the impossible. There is, perhaps, a suggestion whether such an employment of consummate art is not an abuse of power; but it is so welcome a relief to escape, even in fancy, from this sad world of grief and trial that I suppose we ought to be grateful to any one who leads us away from it, even for an hour, to the realms of the unknown. If, on the one hand, it is apt to suggest a doubt of all truth since falsehood can be so well, and upon the other it introduces us to misfortune and

THE BROOKLYN CRUISE.

The Fleet at Vineyard Haven and the Yachtmen at Oak Bluffs—Something of the Yachtmen at Oak Bluffs and the Yachtmen at Oak Bluffs.

MARTIN'S VINEYARD, July 30, 1874.

It was decided last evening, at a meeting of the captains, held on board the flagship Madeline, that the squadron should remain at Vineyard Haven until Friday morning, and that to-day be taken up with a visit to Cape Poge, trolling for bluish. This settled, many of the yachtsmen returned to their boats, determining to rest on board for the night, while others, of the kind who are restless upon all occasions and wouldn't be quiet in church, went ashore and were driven over to Oak Bluffs, to note the whirl of the dancers and observe the groups of promenaders at the beach. Dick Deed, Stinson, and John L. Hughes for the "managing" man of the "American Band," which had called the New Bedford into attending, that the visit of the strangers might be more pleasant. For the first few hours on dry land the time went cheerily by, as many old acquaintances were met and new friendships made; but a squall from the southwest burst upon the patrons of Sea View about nine o'clock, and the day went out about as disagreeably as possible, proving as "dirty" as "Old Prob," has chronicled in many a year. The rain descended and the wind blew and beat upon the Sea View and the docks and the grounds around about until it seemed as if the clouds would be blown away, the docks smashed into the water, and the yachtsmen washed out into the very sea. So the yachtsmen did not have so much fun after all, and, for that, neither those on board, nor if it was unpleasant on dry land, it was equally so in the bay. But the squall had pretty fair manners, and left the people of the "city by the sea," the poetic name of this place, and this morning broke gloriously; the dark clouds had floated away, and the sun, with its golden eye of fabulous fierceness, flamed across the bay and beamed upon the snowy canvas of the yachts, and everybody was happy.

Soon after the fleet had breakfasted, an ancient

mariner from Vineyard Haven notified Commodore

Voorhis that the half-dozen catboats he had engaged

for the grounds of Cape Poge, and in about five

minutes they were filled with earnest disciples of old Isaac

Watson, and away they went, skimming out of the

harbor for the day's amusement on the ocean. The

result of this expedition was very satisfactory, and

the fishermen returned in good spirits, though, like

all such parties, very hungry and somewhat wet.

The four boats that made repeated trips between

Wood's Hole and New Bedford and this place brought

large accessions of fair ladies and their escorts

this morning, for, somehow or other, the news of the

yachtsmen being here had been great crowds to them, and while I write there are great crowds

about the hotels and the streets, waiting for a

trip—that is, a very large number of them, being a

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it takes place the fact shall be chronicled later in

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This little city is a pretty place and the

Sea View House is charmingly situated on the bluff,

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